Opening and Closing Routines for Multi-Level Classrooms

"How can I create a classroom that meets the needs of all my learners, when I have so many different levels and types of students?"

An effective approach is to establish short, structured routines during the crucial first and final 5-10 minutes of every class that create different access points to language goals in your classroom.

In this webinar, we will:

- discuss why routines for the first and final minutes of class are important

- examine specific opening and closing routines that provide language practice opportunities and develop academic skills for students of all levels

U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

A E

Richard Silberg

Richard recently retired after 39 years of teaching in California; he taught numerous subjects, with a focus on supporting English language learners.

Richard has taught English to displaced Afghan students in Albania, refugee families in California, and secondary students in China. He has taught ELT methodology in Uzbekistan and Cambodia, where he was a U.S. Department of State English Language Fellow and Specialist. He is currently working on a Specialist project in Timor-Leste.

Richard also has extensive experience in the theatre arts as an actor, director, storyteller, and playwright. He holds a master's degree in Language and Literacy Education from the University of California-Berkeley.

# Opening and Closing Routines for Multi-Level Classrooms

Agenda

- Discuss why **routines for the first and final minutes of class** are important to successfully teach in multi-level environments

- Distinguish between **opening routines**, **classroom routines**, and **warm-up** activities

- **Practice specific routines** to implement in the **first** and **final** minutes of class

- **Bonus!** Identify a structured language practice strategy you can use with these routines and throughout lessons
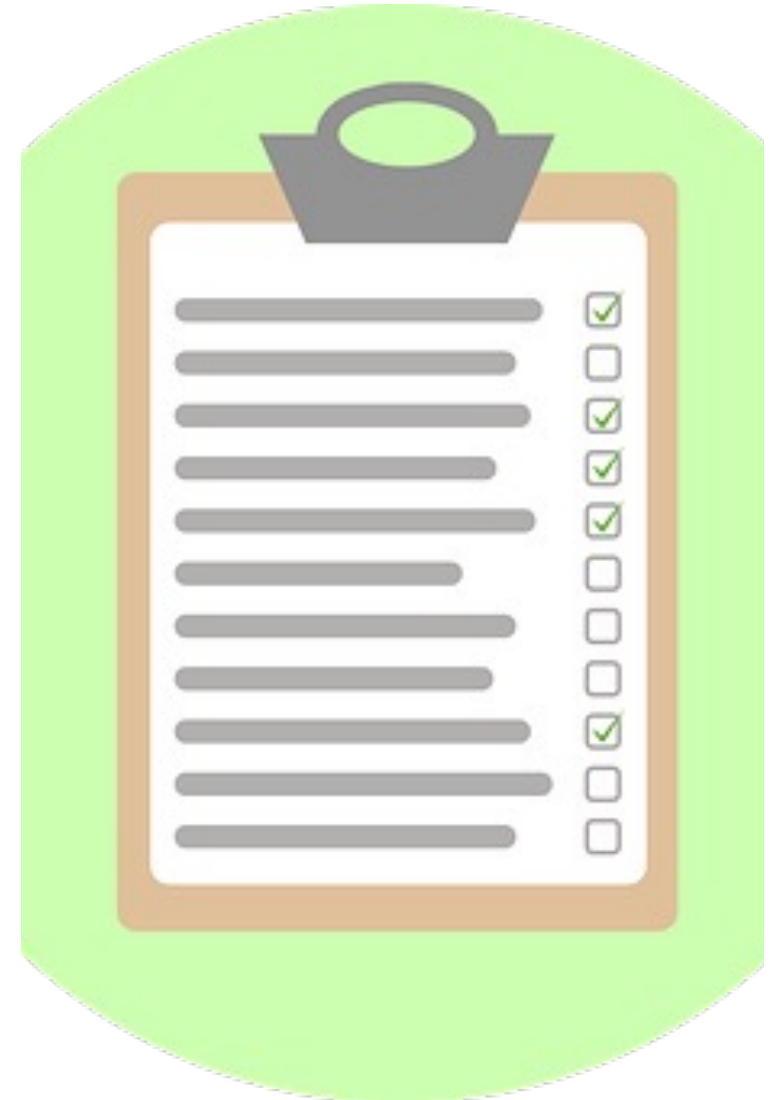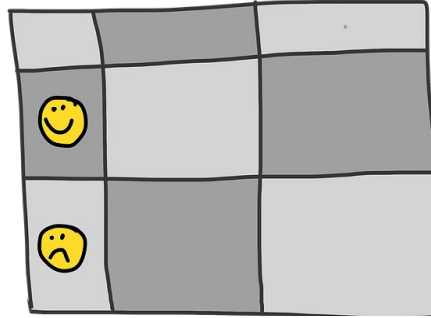
Characteristics of multi-level English classes

• Students communicate in English at a variety of different levels

• Students have different types of learning backgrounds

• Students have different literacy levels in their native language(s)

What are some challenges associated with teaching English in a multi-level classroom?

Challenges

- Finding appropriate teaching resources and material

- Organizing appropriate groupings within the class

- Determining the individual needs of each student

- Ensuring that all students are challenged and interested / classroom management

Advantages

- We become better at finding and adapting materials

- Students learn to work well in a group

- Students become independent learners

- Students become partners in learning

# Strategies for working in multi-level classrooms

- Vary activities and groupings

- Develop and follow lesson plans with clear, obtainable student outcomes

- Establish instructional routines and **stick to them**

- Make certain **every** student has an opportunity to practice the target language multiple times in **every class** at a level obtainable by them

- Conduct **multiple informal formative assessments** to monitor student progress **throughout** your lessons

Reduced to two essential points

- Use routines throughout, but **especially for the first 5-10 minutes and final minutes of class**

- Give **every** student an opportunity to practice the target language multiple times in **every class** at an obtainable level

Why are opening and closing routines important for multi-level classes?
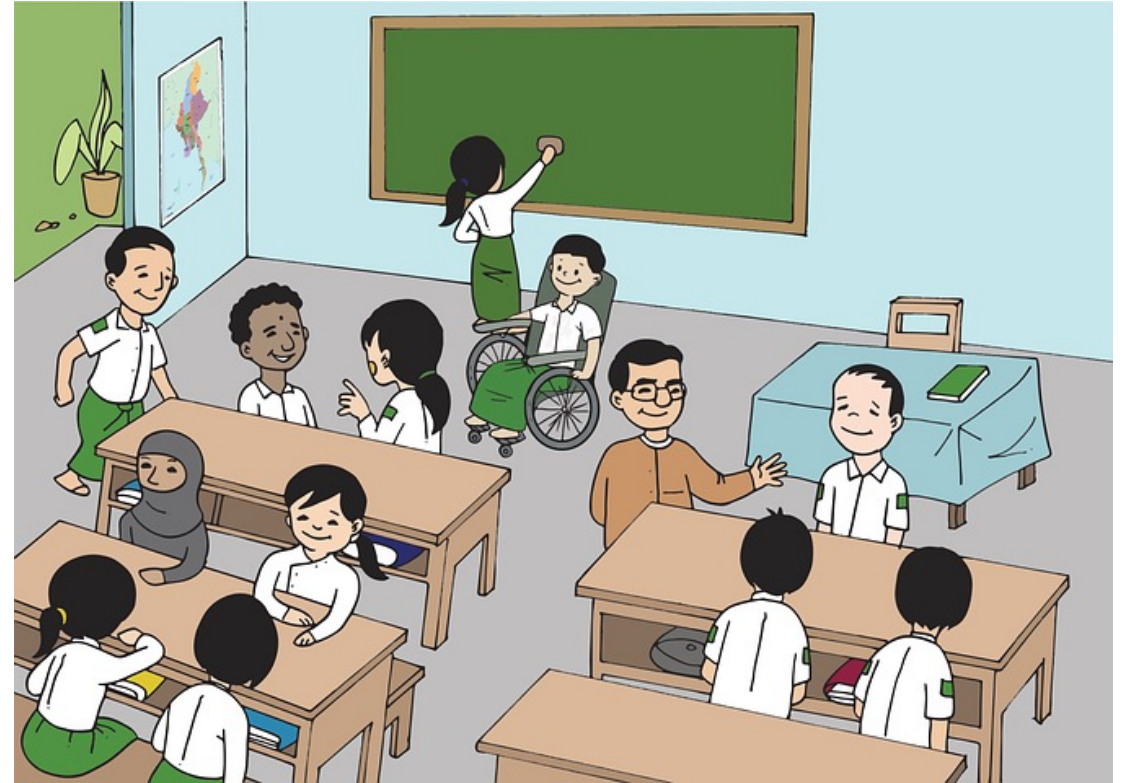
Opening Routines

Once upon a time…
When I say "Crick," you say "Crack"

What storytelling openings do you know from your own—or other—cultures?

What are some ways you begin your classes?

Warm-ups, Warmers, Ice Breakers
Breath Release

Warm-ups, Warmers, Ice Breakers
Articulation Exercise

What are the differences between warm ups and opening routines?

Warm ups

- Fun, motivating activity/game to prepare students for class
- Usually whole class participation
- Short, fast paced
- Get students warmed up for the main lesson
- Low pressure

Teacher directed

Opening routines

- Specific language objective with high-frequency exposure
- Students can do alone or in groups (after practice) **without** teacher input
- Students can access at their current level; can be modified up/down
- Require very little teacher prep
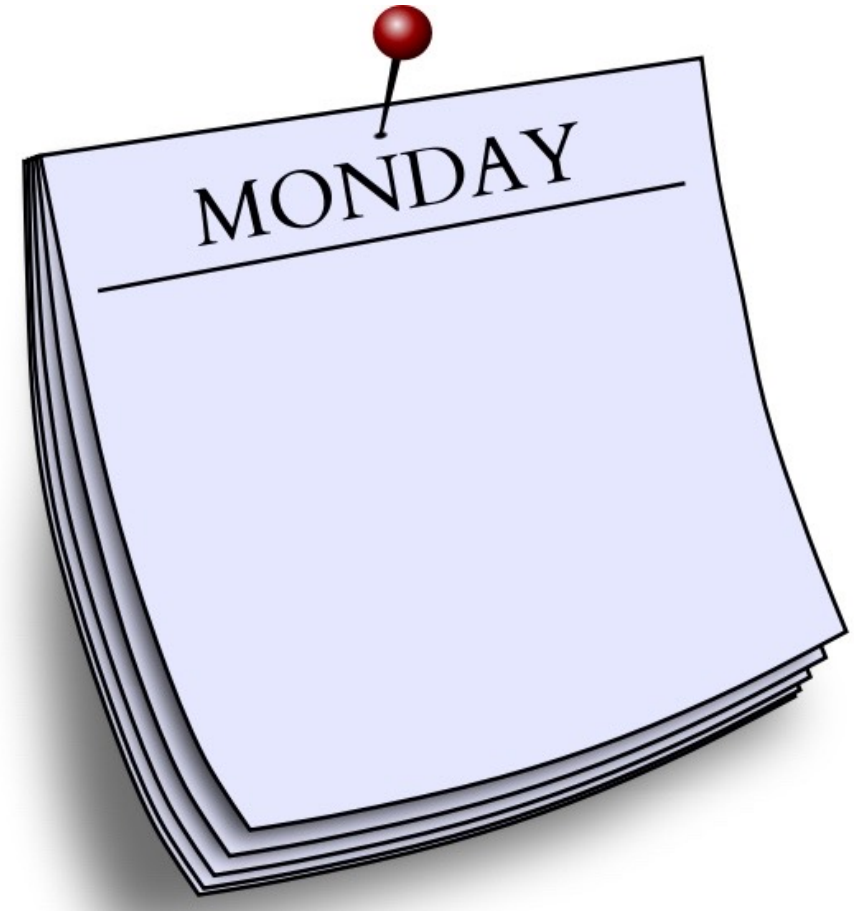- Low pressure/5-10 minutes

Student centered

My approach to planning a class period for multi-level classrooms

- 5-10 minute **opening** routine

- Classroom routines

- Quick whole class warm up

- Main lesson

- Exit/closing routine

Opening routines we'll explore today

- Mentor sentences
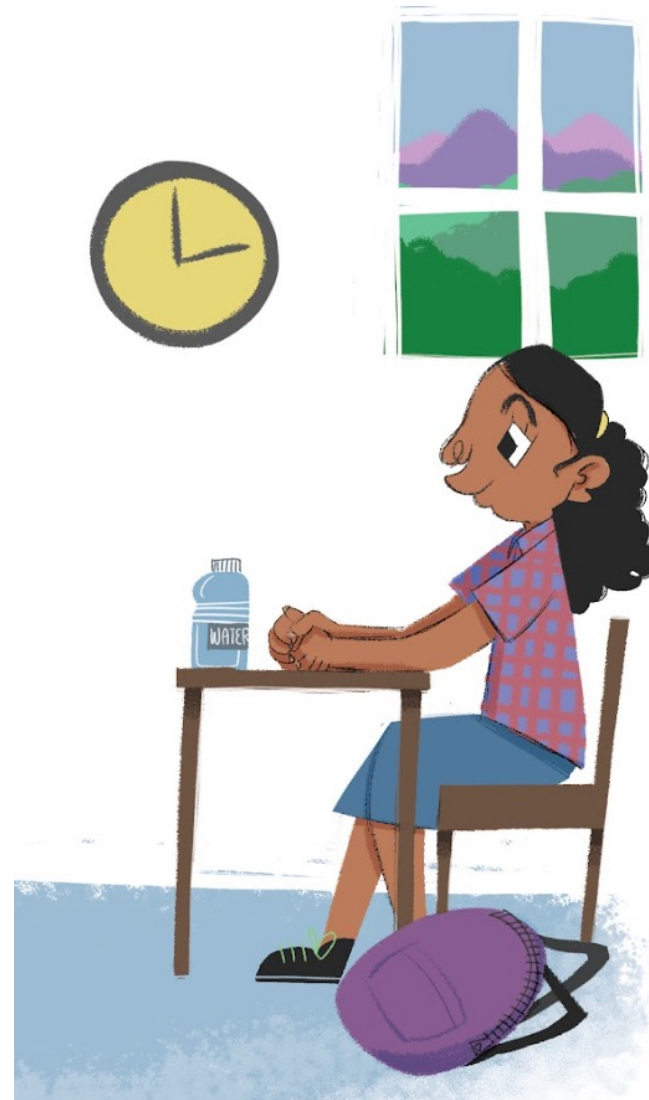- Quote analysis
- Vocabulary categorization

MONDAY

1. Mentor Sentences
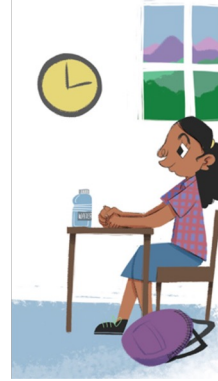
Mentor Sentences

The student sits.

Step 1

The student sits.

- Copy the sentence in your student notebook.

- With your elbow partner or table group, talk about what you **notice** about the sentence. (word order, spelling, meaning, anything that you think about)

- Your team will share one thing with the class. Use this sentence starter to share:

We **notice** that_____.

Step 2

The student sits.
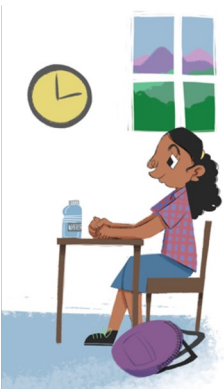
Word Bank

Banku liafuan

A	B	C
The A	student teacher friend *(kolega)*	sits runs walks listens

_____ _____ _____.

word from A   word from B   word from C

liafuan husi A   *liafuan husi B*   *liafuan husi C*

Step 3

The student sits.
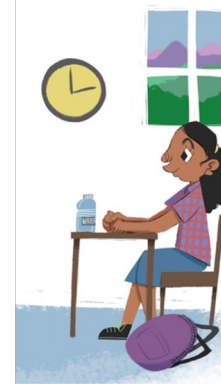
*Alone, or with a partner, write your own
three-word sentence in English following the pattern of the model.
Use different words from those in Part B.*

- *Mesamesak, ka ho pár ida, hakerek ita-nia fraze rasik ho liafuan 3 iha Inglés tuir padraun modelu ne'beé iha.*

Advanced Mentor Sentences

This was a deer mouse,

a little creature with big eyes and long hind legs like a miniature kangaroo.

Shelia Burnford: *The Incredible Journey*

Step 2 - Analysis

This was a deer mouse, <u>a little creature with big eyes and long hind legs like a miniature kangaroo</u>.

Look at the underlined phrase. What question does it answer, or what information does it tell you? Use one of the two sentence starters if you would like.

The underlined phrase answers the question_____.

or

The underlined phrase tells us _____.

Step 3 - Imitation

This was a deer mouse, <u>a little creature with big eyes and long hind legs like a miniature kangaroo</u>.

____was (were, is are)_____, _____like_____.

Mr. Richard's: She is my daughter, <u>an artist who creates her work by painting and then carving on large pieces of wood, like a combination printmaker, wood carver, and painter.</u>

A quick example from Uzbekistan

Mentor sentence:

My daughter is drawing quickly in her notebook.
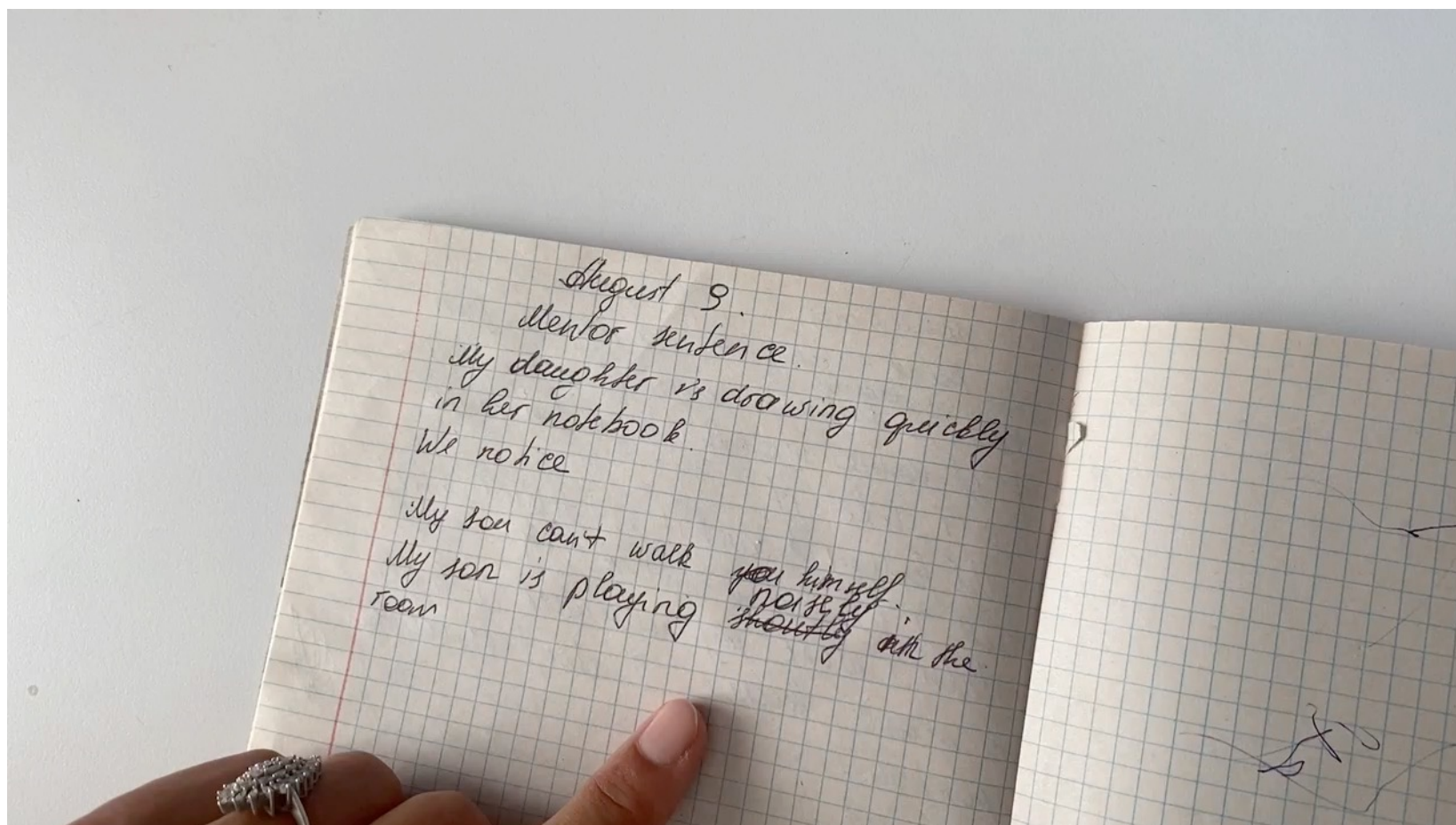
Where do the mentor sentences come from?

- The student text

- Stories, novels, articles the students are reading

- Teacher created for specific language structures/patterns

- Sentence imitation workbooks

Mentor Sentences: Summary

- Keep the same routine for a few weeks before introducing a new one

- **Keep the sentences simple** at first so everyone is comfortable with the routine—then add more complex sentences, or **choices** of sentences for different levels

- One goal is **learner autonomy**, students ability to work independently—freeing the teacher to interact with students who need more support, or even with those you wish to go further with, in brief 30-second conversations

What do students who finish early do?

Sharing sentences

How could you have students share their sentences?

- <u>No</u> sharing; you assess student understanding as you walk the room, or by collecting notebooks

- Partner/table share. Just a few extra minutes

- **Bonus: Give one, get one** … one of my favorite structured language practice strategies

Give one, Get one
Hands up, stand up, pair up
Go go

1. Students copy the sentence, write what they notice, and an Imitation.

2. When finished writing, students hold their notebooks in the air.

3. They find another student who is ready.

After finding a partner, students share their sentences.

After each partner has shared, it's "Hands up, stand up and pair up" with a new partner.

The new partners share

Repeat the process so each student has had the chance to share with three partners.

In this way, students have had multiple opportunities to practice the target language structure.

Mentor Sentences

**Features of structured opening routines
for multi-level classes?**

✓ Specific language objective with high-frequency exposure

✓ Students can do alone or in groups (after practice) **without** teacher input

✓ Students can access at their current level; can be modified up/down

✓ Require very little teacher prep

✓ Low pressure/5-10 minutes

2. Quote Analysis

Quote Analysis
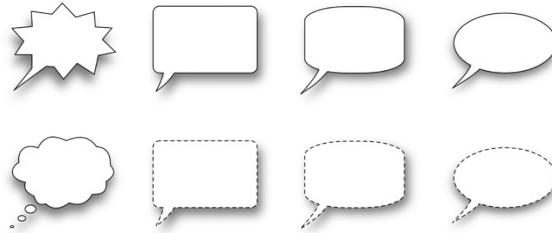
"The secret of your futures is hidden in your daily routine."
- Mike Murdock

Copy the quote into your notebook.
Read the quote 3 times to yourself and then once to the person sitting next to you.

First steps

copy the quote, say the quote, identify the topic

"The secret of your futures is hidden in your daily routine."

- The topic of the quote is _____.

- This quote is about _____.

- Start slowly to build understanding of the routine, then when students are familiar with it, they will be able to work without the teacher

Next step: Introduce Analysis

"The secret of your futures is hidden in your daily routine."

In this quote about <u>routines</u>, the author's perspective is_____.

In this quote about_____, the author is saying that_____.

"The secret of your futures is hidden in your daily routine."

"In his quote about routines, Murdock's perspective is that if someone wants to gain their goals in any part of their life, they shouldn't stop trying, for even small drops can break a stone."
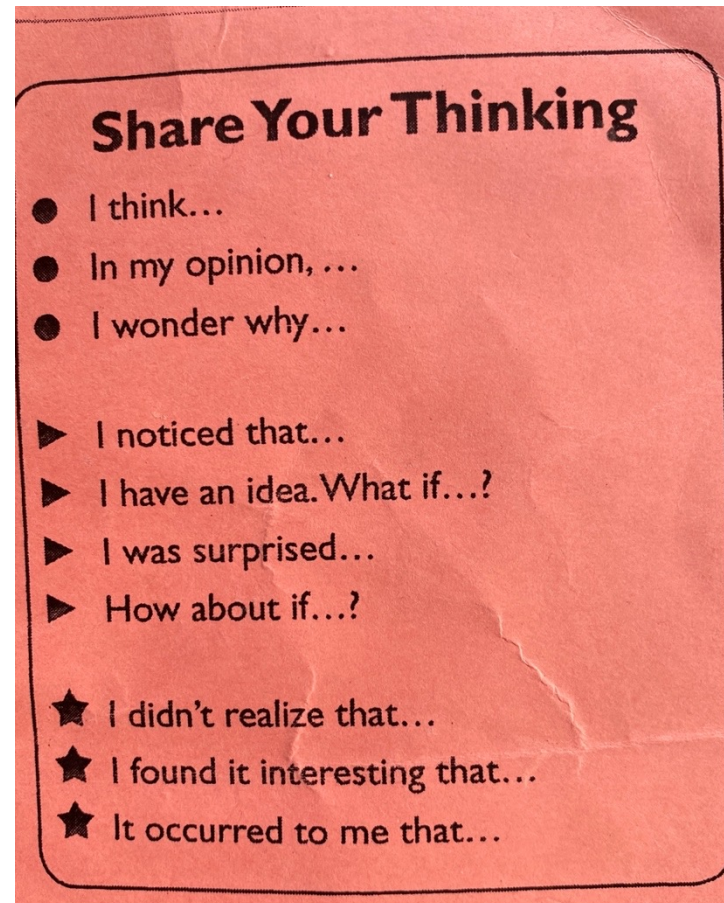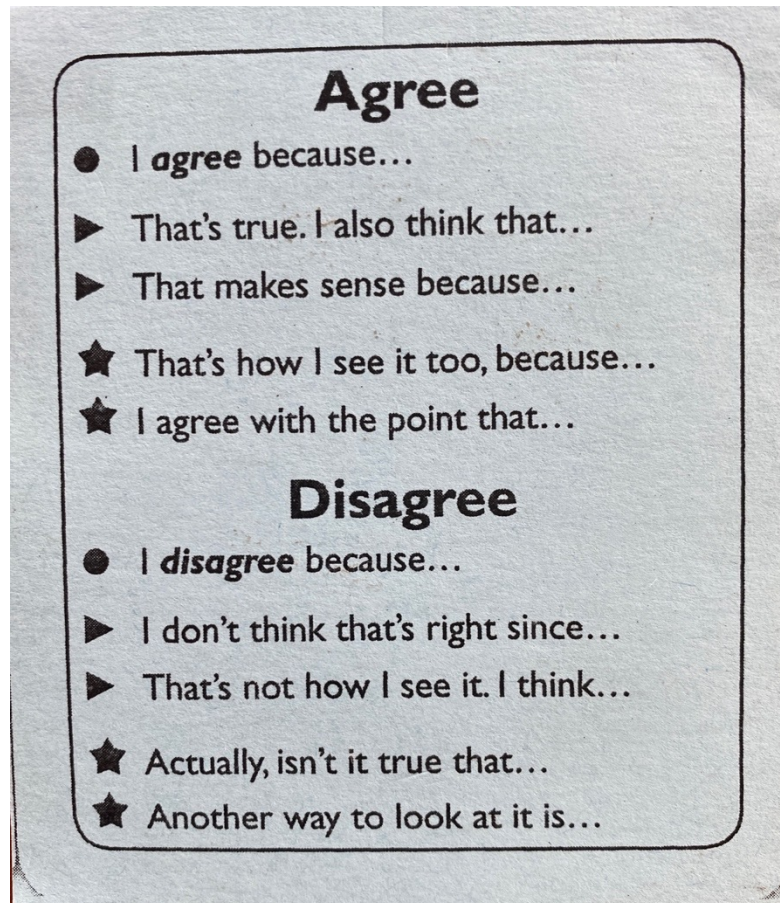
Step 3: The students' thinking

"If you really want to make friends, go to their house and eat with them…the people who give you their food give you their heart."

- César Chávez

"If you really want to make friends, go to their house and eat with them…the people who give you their food give you their heart."

- César Chávez

Agree

- I *agree* because…
- ▶ That's true. I also think that…
- ▶ That makes sense because…
- ★ That's how I see it too, because…
- ★ I agree with the point that…

Disagree

- I *disagree* because…
- ▶ I don't think that's right since…
- ▶ That's not how I see it. I think…
- ★ Actually, isn't it true that…
- ★ Another way to look at it is…

Share Your Thinking

- I think…
- In my opinion, …
- I wonder why…

- ▶ I noticed that…
- ▶ I have an idea. What if…?
- ▶ I was surprised…
- ▶ How about if…?

- ★ I didn't realize that…
- ★ I found it interesting that…
- ★ It occurred to me that…

You can gradually remove or modify the scaffold of sentence starters when students are ready.

You can use the quotes for mentor sentences

"If you really want to make friends, go to their house and eat with them…the people who give you their food give you their heart."

- César Chávez

Follow Mr. Chávez's pattern, and create your own sentence

If_____, (then)_____…
_____.

Mr. Richard's example:

If you want to learn how to dance, then listen to music as often as you can… the soul of music can't be taught, it must be felt.

Where do the quotes come from?

- Internet search "Quotes about…."

- Stories, novels, articles the students are reading

- Student contributions

Sharing sentences

- In notebooks only (teacher interaction)

- In small groups/pairs

- As a class (choose a random few students)

- Using a structured language practice strategy

Quote Analysis summary

- Quotes can be inspirational, or they can be tied into a theme from your curriculum

- Provide extensive scaffolding for the first sessions, then remove or reduce when students are ready

- Stick with the routine for a few weeks before introducing another routine

- Decide on a sharing/accountability/assessment strategy

Quote Analysis
Features of structured opening routines for multi-level classes?

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3. Vocabulary Categories

Categorization
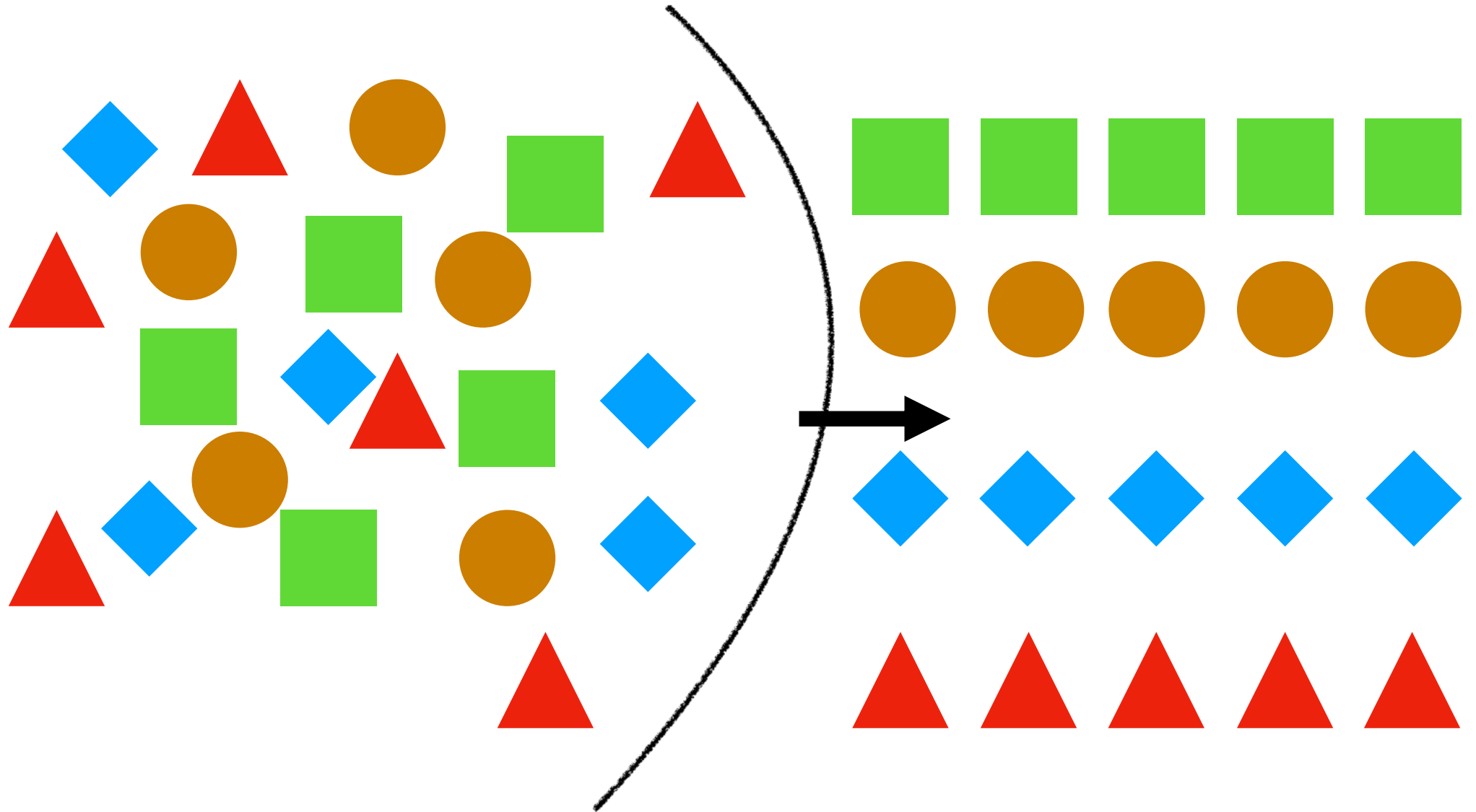
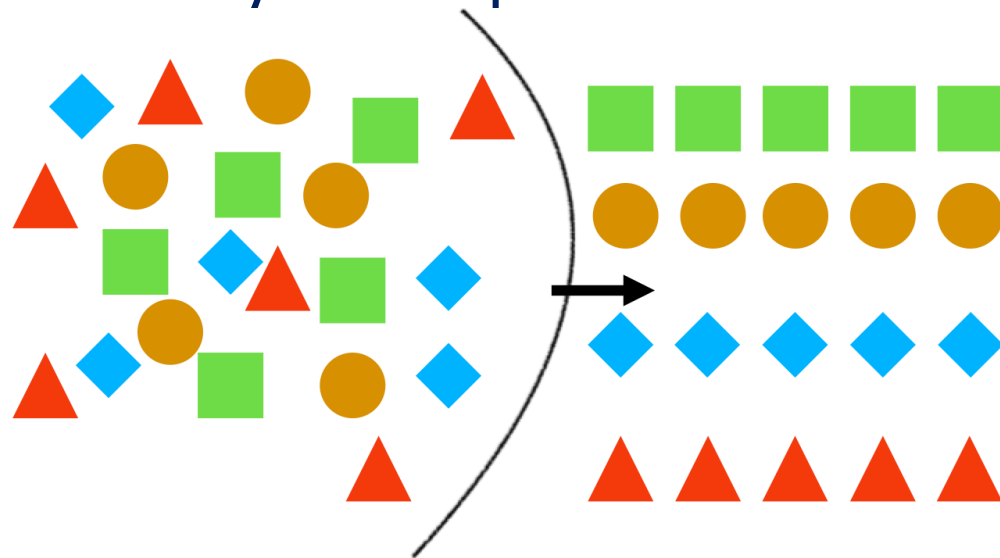Fit the following vocabulary words into different categories.
The categories must be based on **meaning** only.

- car
- planet
- elevator
- baseball
- bicycle
- swimming
- school
- hospital
- meteor

What categories do you see?

Share your responses in the chat.

Text: "How to Make a Good Impression"

Interview	Spouse	Boss	Reaction	Persuasive
Mind	Pleasant	Excitement	Friend	Fear
Unforgettable	Nervous	Kind	Outgoing	Helped
Communication	Show	Successful	Stranger	Feelings
Angrily	Smile	Attitude	Negatively	Presentation

Sort these words into the following categories:
1. Positive and negative
2. People and feelings
3. **Make your own categories**

Where do the words come from?

- The student text

- Stories, novels, articles the students have or are currently reading

- Past units of study

- Common English word lists

- Signs in English throughout the community

- Social media

Sharing Categories

- In notebooks only (teacher interaction)

- In small groups/pairs

- Randomly choose a few students

- Using a structured language practice strategy

Vocabulary Categorization Routines: Summary and Rationale

- Help with the principles of **association** and **depth**

- Deepen knowledge of partially known words

- Bring attention to key words; minimal focus on less important words

- Students do this in groups and use critical thinking skills to justify their category choices

- Support retrieval of long-ago-studied vocabulary

Other routines
early finishers can do

- Alphabet cards (for younger learners)
- Homework share
- Student team textbook review
- Notebook review
- Image analysis
- Independent reading
- Quizlet/flashcards
- Peer vocabulary

Mentor Sentences, Quote Analysis and Vocabulary Categorization

Features of structured opening routines for multi-level classes?

- ✓ Specific language objective with high-frequency exposure
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End-of-class Routines

How do you end your classes?

- Whaddya know?

  (What do you know?)

- Words, phrases, questions Mr. Richard was asked about or thought about today
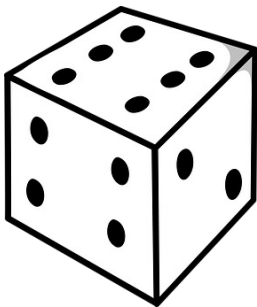
- Exit tickets

Whaddya know?

2 players

- Player 1 rolls the dice—or the "leader" will roll the dice…and keeps rolling.

- Until player 1 gets a "6", player 2 writes as many **words or phrases** related to the topic as possible in the correct box.

A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I
J	K	L
M	N	O
P	Q	R
S	T	U
V	W	XYZ

- At rolling a "6", players switch roles and repeat.

- Continue in this way, until teacher calls "time."

Waddya Know?

A Apple Are you hungry?	B Bowl	C Cumin
D Dinner	E Evening meal	F Fast
G Go wash your hands	H Hungry	I Intestines I'm full
J Jelly	K	L Lettuce
M Make your own	N Napkins	O Oranges
P Pass the salt	Q Quiet while we eat.	R Restaurant
S Soup	T Take some more	U
V	W When will it be ready?	XYZ Yesterday we had the same thing.

Activate! Games for Learning
American English - Dice Template
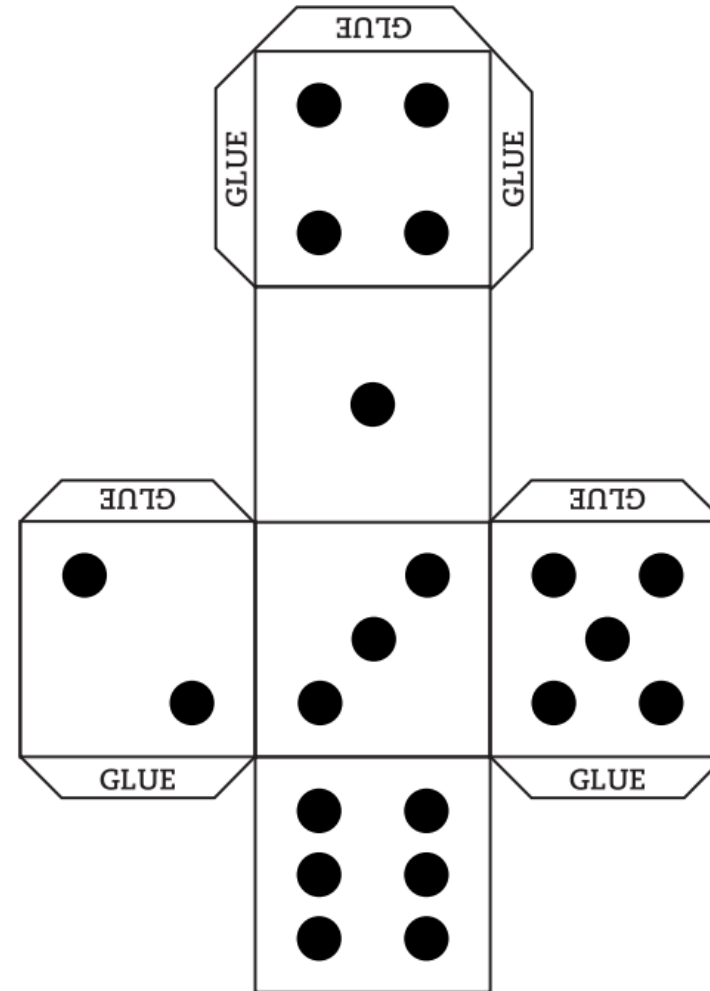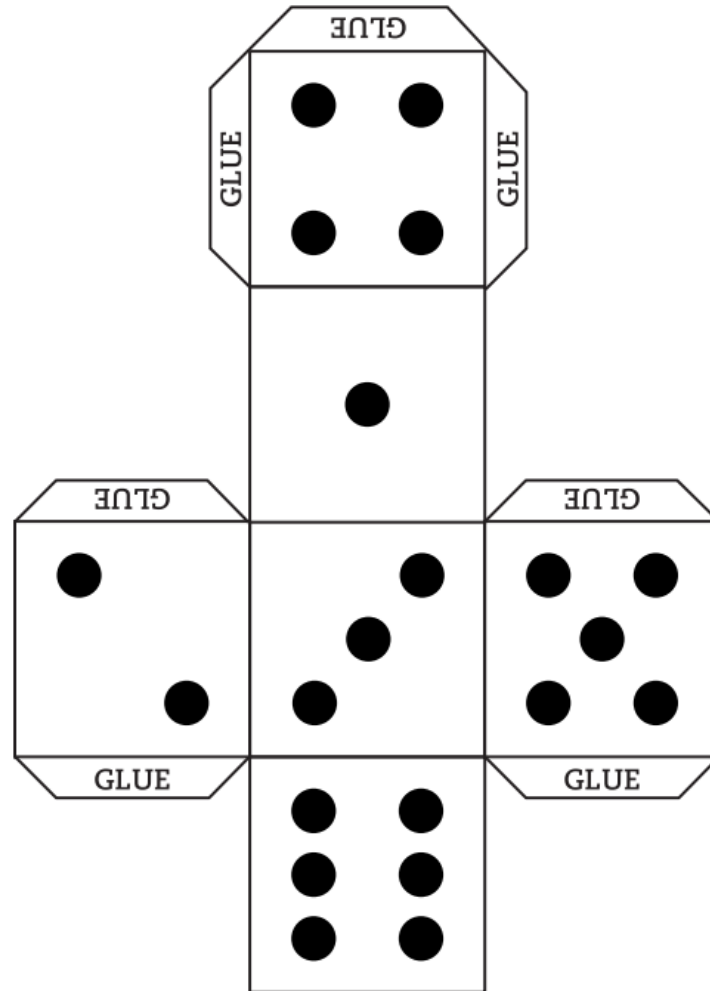
Words or phrases Mr. S heard, was asked about or thought about during class

Period 3 - Thursday, November 29, 2018

Words or phrases Mr. S heard, thought about or was asked about today:

- **Convince**
- **Persuade**
- **Ask**
- **Beg**
- **I believe that…..**
- **Just think about….**
- **Can you….?**
- **Can I…?**

Exit tickets

What are some exit ticket ideas you have tried, or heard of?

- Write a word you know well from today's lesson

- What was easy today? What was challenging today?

- Share a word, phrase, or idea you are confused about

- Write a question about something you learned

Recap: Helpful Tips

- Always practice or model an activity first

- Focus on one routine at a time before introducing a new one

- Routines take time and teacher direction at first

- Plan ahead:
  - *Where will students move?*
  - *How much time can you devote to the routine?*
  - *How much scaffolding will be needed at first?*
  - *Once you establish the routine, what is the best use of your time while students work independently, or in groups?*
  - *Which students will need the most support?*

Tips

Agenda

- Discuss why **routines for the first and final minutes of class** are important. Distinguish between **opening routines**, **classroom routines**, and **warm-up** activities

- **Practice specific routines** to implement in the **first** and **final** minutes of class

- **Bonus!** Identify a structured language practice strategy you can use with these routines and throughout lessons

Let's stop and reflect!

A. A word or phrase learned in the webinar

B. Something you learned in the webinar

C. What do you want to know more about?

D. What was most interesting in the webinar?

Share your responses in the chat or comments.

Choose <u>one</u> exit ticket prompt.

Include the prompt letter before your response.

Opening and Closing Routines

References

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- Shvdiko, E. (2014). [ESL classroom routines.](#) TESOL International Association blog.

- Silberg, R. (draft, n.d.). "Learn English with Jacinta and Friends" - ideas from the draft Teacher's edition are available on the AE Live Webinar Resource Center

- Teacher's Corner. (n.d.). [Incorporating opportunities for interaction and sharing](#). American English website.

Thank you!

Questions or concerns?

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Reflection Questions

1. Have your ideas about the difference between warm-up activities, classroom management tasks, and opening routines changed as a result of the webinar? How?

2. How might you adapt these opening and closing routines to suit upcoming language or content topics in your syllabus? How might you adjust them for more- or less-proficient learners?

3. As students become more proficient in completing routines individually or in groups, what could you be doing while they work? How can you use information gained from observing students working and other output from these routines?